

18th CONGRESS, }  
1st Session.

[ 67 ]

## REMONSTRANCE

OF

SUNDRY MERCHANTS, MANUFACTURERS, AND OTHERS,

OF THE

CITY OF BOSTON AND ITS VICINITY,

Against the Bill to amend the several Acts

*Imposing Duties on Imports and Tonnage.*

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FEBRUARY 9, 1824.

Referred to the Committee of the whole House, to which is committed the above-mentioned Bill.

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WASHINGTON:

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1824.



## REMONSTRANCE.

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*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States: the Remonstrance of Merchants, Manufacturers, Mechanics, and Others, of Boston, against the passage of an Act to amend the several acts for imposing Duties on Imports.*

The undersigned, Merchants and Manufacturers of Boston and its vicinity, impressed with a firm conviction that the system of Impost Duties contemplated in the Bill to amend the Tariff, if carried into effect, cannot but be productive of consequences equally important and injurious to all the various interests of the United States, and, at no distant period, to the Manufacturing interest itself, would be wanting in duty to themselves, and in a proper regard to the interests of other classes of their fellow-citizens, like them depending on the immediate or indirect operations of Foreign Commerce for a support, were they to omit the renewed expressions of their decided disapprobation of the principles as well as details of the Bill under consideration. Happily, at the present time, many intelligent individuals of the manufacturing class, coincide with the undersigned in the opinion, that excessive duties on foreign articles will be a heavy burthen on the Agricultural, Commercial, and Mechanic Interests, and indeed on every class of consumers, without any equivalent benefit to Manufacturers;—and, as we believe, to the injury and perhaps destruction of those very branches of industry, which it is the avowed design of the patrons of the bill to encourage and protect.

The undersigned will not occupy the time of Congress, by endeavoring to support their opinion either on acknowledged principles of public economy, or by elaborate illustrations of probable effects. The former are no doubt familiar to those who compose the concentrated wisdom of our nation, and the latter have been ably and frequently presented to them and the public; but, in no shape, as the undersigned believe, more ably or lucidly than in the Memorial of Merchants and others of this place, interested in Commerce and Agriculture, presented to your honorable body in the session of 1820—1821. This presents, in a candid and intelligent manner, the reasons which then, as well as now, induce the undersigned respectfully to remonstrate against “the passage of the Bill to amend the several acts for imposing Duties on Imports, the Tariff of Duties it proposes, and the principles on which it is avowedly founded, as having a tendency, however different may be the motives of those who recommend them, to diminish the industry, impede the prosperity, and corrupt the morals of the people.”





*[To be annexed to the remonstrance of sundry merchants, manufacturers, and others, of the City of Boston, &c. against the bill to amend the several acts imposing duties on imports and tonnage.]*

## REPORT

OF THE

*Committee of Merchants, and others, of Boston,*

ON THE TARIFF.

At a meeting of Merchants, and others, interested in the prosperity of commerce and agriculture, at Boston, on the 17th day of August, to take into consideration a communication from the Chamber of Commerce at Philadelphia, on the tariff recommended to Congress at its last session, the following persons were chosen a committee to adopt such measures, in relation to the subject, as they should deem expedient:

Messrs. William Gray,  
James Perkins,  
John Dorr,  
Nathaniel Goddard,  
Benjamin Rich,  
Israel Thorndike, Jun.  
William Shimmin,  
Thomas W. Ward,  
William Harris,  
Daniel Webster,  
Nathan Appleton,  
Abbot Lawrence,  
Joseph Sewall,  
Jonathan Phillips,

Lot Wheelwright,  
Caleb Loring,  
Samuel A. Welles,  
George Bond,  
George Hallet,  
Samuel P. Gardner,  
Josiah Knapp,  
Isaac Winslow,  
Winslow Lewis,  
Thomas Wigglesworth,  
John Cotton,  
John Parker,  
William Sturgis.

The meeting was then adjourned to the 2d day of October, at which time, delegates from the principal seaports of Massachusetts, and farmers, manufacturers, and all others feeling an interest in the subject were, invited to attend.

The committee appointed seven of their number, Messrs. Perkins, Gardner, Webster, Welles, Shimmin, Sturgis, and Dorr, to prepare a report and resolutions, to be submitted at the adjourned meeting.

At the general meeting in Faneuil Hall, on the 2d of October, the following report, presented by Mr. Perkins, Chairman of the committee last mentioned, was accepted, and the resolutions accompanying it adopted unanimously; and it was ordered that they be printed, and a copy sent to every member of Congress from this state.

WILLIAM GRAY, *Chairman.*

WILLIAM FOSTER, JUN. *Secretary.*

## REPORT.

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Your committee beg leave to report, that we have examined the proposed tariff, and submit to you some remarks, relating to its probable operation on the community, and to the principles on which it is professedly founded. We shall not enter into a minute discussion of its details: as the imposts which ought to be laid, depend, in every case, on a variety of considerations peculiar to itself, and as we do not consider it any part of the duty assigned to us to digest a code of revenue laws. Neither shall we invite your attention particularly to the effects of the measure on commerce; because we presume you wish to have it distinctly understood, that the merchants in this vicinity neither expect nor desire any peculiar favors, nor any encouragement or protection whatsoever, which is not required by the interests of the public. They were not forward, therefore, to oppose the duties recently recommended, however pernicious to themselves as individuals; believing that it was their duty to acquiesce in them, if the public good required it, and that they would not be imposed, if it did not. But the influence which has been obtained by the zeal of private interest, admonishes us, that those whose situation and experience enable them to judge of the operation of this new system, should exert themselves to diffuse such information as may tend to make its consequences rightly and generally understood. Its avowed object is to direct and control the occupations of men, by granting special privileges to those engaged in particular pursuits. This can be done, (waiving the important question whether it can be done at all without violating the spirit of the constitution,) only at the expense of the community: for, it is evident, that legislation does not create wealth, but simply transfers it from hand to hand, and can enrich one class, only by impoverishing others. It would surely be surprising, that a system of restriction so unequal, and so repugnant to all sound theory, should be adopted by a free and enlightened people, at a time when the greatest statesmen of Europe, after a long trial of it, are openly acknowledging its incorrectness, and whole nations suffering and lamenting the consequences of its adoption; and when our own unexampled success, under a more liberal policy, has given the sanction of experience to the deductions of reason.

This tariff would impose on certain foreign manufactures, duties, professedly and effectually prohibitory; and the question involved in its adoption is, not whether the consumer of those goods shall pay a higher price for them, but whether he shall be prevented from pur-

chasing them at all; not, whether the duty now levied on the importation of them, shall be a little increased or diminished, but whether they shall be totally excluded. In one case, this is already done. From the most accurate information, founded chiefly on official documents it appears that, from the year 1800 to the year 1812, both inclusive, the duties received on the importation of the coarse cottons of India, amounted to more than three millions nine hundred and thirty-six thousand dollars. But, in 1816, the duty was raised to six and a quarter cents on every square yard, about eighty-three and a half per cent. on their average cost, which, added to the necessary charges, equal to twenty-seven per cent. more, has utterly excluded them; and the whole revenue once derived from this source, is lost. Since the organization of our government, there have been paid into the Treasury of the United States, from the customs alone, nearly three hundred and fifty millions of dollars, while the whole amount of internal revenue and direct taxes, has been little more than thirty-four millions.

To prevent the importation of manufactures, would, of course, deprive the Treasury of the impost now levied on them, and an equal sum must, therefore, in order to support the necessary expenses of Government, be raised by some other direct or indirect tax on the people.

The Committee on Manufactures, who prepared the Tariff, did not overlook nor deny this consequence of its adoption, and, in order to remedy it, provided, that an additional impost should be laid on all articles of general consumption or necessary use, which are not raised in our own country, such as spices, coffee, and many others, forming a large part of our imports. A new impost on such articles, by increasing their price, would have some tendency to diminish their consumption, and thus prevent an increase of the revenue proportionate to the increase of duty; but, making no allowance for this diminution, the additional duty on them would not nearly supply the deficiency occasioned by the loss of the imposts on manufactures. The chairman of the committee just mentioned, appeared to be well aware of this fact, and declared it to be another inevitable consequence of their system, that an excise should be imposed on domestic manufactures; and this, if our manufacturers are to have a monopoly secured to them, as seems to be contemplated, will be a new tax on the consumer. The first consequence, then, of excluding foreign manufactures by high duties, is to create a necessity for some other tax, equal to the whole sum now levied on them, and which will necessarily be lost by their exclusion.

Another consequence, and the only one which can benefit the American manufacturer, is, to enable him to raise the price of his productions in our market, by adding to it a sum equal to the difference between the present and the proposed prohibitory duty, which addition must be paid entirely by domestic consumers. No duty could enable him to manufacture for exportation; for, if he cannot, at home, enter into competition with foreigners, without being protected by an

impost, it is obvious that he cannot rival them abroad, where there is no such discrimination in his favor, and where he is burdened, as well as they, with the expense of transportation. Duties imposed for the mere purpose of revenue, give an advantage, equal to their whole amount, to our manufactures; but, by increasing them till they become prohibitory, the people suffer a two-fold injury—the price of the goods prohibited is raised, and the revenue, formerly collected from them, is lost. With the sole motive, then, of empowering the manufacturer to raise his price, and thus tax the public in this way, for his emolument; another tax, from which he can derive no advantage, is, at once, to be laid on all articles of general use which we cannot produce, and hereafter, still a third, either on the consumption of domestic manufactures, or directly on property and labor. We should not object to any burden, equally apportioned, to raise the revenue necessary for administering the Government; but, to impose one tax, for no earthly purpose but to facilitate the imposition of another, seems, to us, to be a policy as whimsical as it is alarming.

The burden occasioned by most of the particular duties recommended, would fall on all the community, but chiefly on those least able to bear it. In this country, the poor man, personally, consumes nearly as much tea, sugar, and coffee, as the rich; and though his clothing is not so fine, yet, its cost constitutes a much greater proportion of his whole expenses. Besides, this new Tariff is so nicely adjusted, as to lay a far heavier impost on coarse cottons and linens, than on those of finer texture. It is obvious that an additional duty can have no effect, except in so far as it increases the price, or diminishes the quantity here, of the foreign merchandise on which it is imposed, and, consequently, can be of no service to any manufacturers but those with whose productions this merchandise now actually comes into competition in our own market. All who have no foreign rivals here at present, who now carry on their business successfully, and supply the country with the fruits of their labor, can derive no advantage, direct or indirect, from a further duty on such articles as they manufacture; since they have already the exclusive possession of the market, and their prices are regulated, not by foreign, but by domestic competition. An additional impost on such articles as are made by these, would be merely nominal, and have no effect, unless it were to blind them to their true interests, and induce them, by the offer of a protection, at once needless and futile, to bear, together with the rest of the community, a great and real burden, for the sole benefit of those classes who now have foreign competitors. Some manufacturers, as those of chocolate and refined sugar, would be greatly injured; and those of cordage, and some of iron, and distillers of molasses, still more so, by the duties proposed to be laid on the raw materials of their manufactures, the price of which must thus be increased, and their consumption lessened. The impost on iron is particularly injurious to industry. It is required for the machines of manufacturers themselves, for all the implements of agriculture, and all the tools of the mechanic arts; and nails, of which six thousand tons are



annually made, and chiefly from foreign iron, are one of the very few of our manufactures now actually exported. A far greater number of men is employed in converting this material into articles of use, than in extracting it from the ore; and surely, the interests of the many ought not to be sacrificed to that of the few. The contemplated excise on domestic manufactures, will not be confined to those to which alone this Tariff affords a real and efficient protection, but extended to all. Let the manufacturers, then, who now carry on their business untaxed, and those who buy their productions, look to the end, and mark the double effect of such excise, in at once raising the cost, and diminishing the consumption of them.

The manufactures abovementioned must immediately suffer, together with farmers, and all other citizens, the double burden of a new tax, to supply the deficiency of the revenue, and an increase in the price of clothing, and of those little, innocent, social luxuries, which have hitherto been so generally enjoyed among us. And for whose emolument? Principally, in effect, for that of the manufacturers of cotton, woollen, iron ore, and glass, men whose business requires considerable capital. We have no means of determining, exactly, the number of workmen engaged in these pursuits; but those employed on cotton are far the most numerous; and the greatest establishment for working this material in America, that at Waltham, which has a capital of nearly half a million, and which makes its own machinery, and does not pay a man beyond its own walls, except the venders of its goods, requires only two hundred and sixty persons, men, women, and children, to carry on its business. But, however the number thus employed be estimated, it is manifest that it must bear so small a proportion to our population, that the rate of wages throughout the country would not be perceptibly increased, and therefore these workmen themselves would receive no more than the present price of labor. The gain, then, would accrue to the capitalists who own the factories, and to them alone.

Thus, according to this new scheme, a great, certain, and immediate burden, falls on the public, most heavily on the poorer classes, and redounds to the exclusive emolument of a few, and those few the wealthy. Surely such a scheme can only be justified by showing, clearly, that some definite national benefit will ultimately result from it, fully equal to the present burden; and its advocates attempt to do this by urging, in the first place, that it is necessary for national independence. How is it necessary for national independence? In the elaborate defence of the system, by the chairman of the committee who invented it, we find it repeatedly asserted, that "we must command our own consumption."\* Happily for us, this phrase is interpreted in the same speech; and it means, as it seems, that we must have neither imposts nor importation—in plain English, that we must use nothing but our own productions.

\* "The nation must command its own consumption."

"This nation must command its own consumption and the means of defence."

"If the country commands its own consumption, importation and imposts cease."

*Speech of Mr. Baldwin, of Pennsylvania, in the House of Representatives, on the 24th of April.*

In a certain sense, we may be said to depend on foreign nations for whatever we receive from them. But they equally depend on us for the equivalent which we pay them for it, and this dependence is voluntary and mutual. Nor is it any derogation from national dignity. A sovereign who receives tribute from a foreign country, depends on it for that tribute; yet he is not therefore its servant, but its master. If one country produces only labor, and exports only manufactures, and another, in return for these, provides it with the raw materials composing them, the former may, with most propriety, be called dependant; for, since every country has necessarily the capacity to labor in proportion to its population, that which produces the raw material may manufacture it whenever it chooses to do so; but the ability of the other to labor would be worthless, if it could not procure the material to which that labor may be applied. The exchange of raw cotton, then, for manufactures, makes Europe dependant on America, rather than America on Europe. Ask the planter of the south, which of the two is the dependant, himself or the Manchester spinner!

The farmer is the most independent man, because he produces the means of subsistence, and the materials for labor; and the nation which does this, holds, like him, in its own hands, the means of commanding the exertions of others. The capacity of providing for our own support constitutes independence, and this is not diminished by exchanging our superfluous productions for those of other countries. If the goods we receive are comforts, or mere luxuries, we can subsist without them; but this is no reason for depriving ourselves of them unnecessarily. If they are manufactures of materials raised by us, and we might, by prohibiting their importation, make them ourselves, at a higher price than they actually cost us: is it not equally true, that, if the hostility of the nation which supplies us, or any other cause, should prevent their importation hereafter, we may make them, at the same additional expense, then? If so, we are not dependant. And why should we assume a burden now, because it may fall on us hereafter? or how does it remedy a future and contingent evil, to make it immediate and certain?

A wise nation, indeed, will not permit itself to be surprised by hostilities, without the means of defence, and will, beforehand, therefore, accumulate those munitions, which are little needed in peace, but immediately requisite in war; or, at least, provide the means of obtaining them. Food and clothing are also necessary for subsistence, and, of course, for defence; but the demand for these being constant at all times, affords, of itself, a constant encouragement to their production, without the special aid of government. With regard to all the means of defence, however, it is enough for independence and security, if we have the ability to produce or procure them when they are wanted. As to munitions of war, they should receive whatever encouragement is necessary; as to food, we are burdened with it; as to clothing, the very proposal to prohibit, immediately, the importation of foreign manufactures used for this purpose, implies, of itself, a conviction

that we are already competent to supply all our wants. The quantity of naval stores, required in peace, being even greater than in war, the stock on hand, for commercial purposes, would, on a sudden eruption of hostilities, afford the means of protection until we could raise them. In thus considering the subject as it affects our means of defence, we have taken the case assumed by manufacturers as most favorable to their pretensions—that of a war with all mankind. It is obvious, that, if there were any neutrals, most of our wants would be supplied as certainly, though not as cheaply, as at present. We have found this to be true in our own wars, and all history confirms it.

But, so far would the enormous tax proposed on hemp and iron be from contributing to national independence, that it would strike a severe blow at our freedom and security. By the existing treaty, American and British ships are placed on the same footing; and it is a subject of gratulation, that our countrymen now sustain the competition. The imposition of new and heavy burdens on our own shipping, would tend to give the British the monopoly of our trade, and to make them our sole carriers. When this is accomplished, there will be no lack of Orders in Council to regulate the trade of America, and the dependence which we shall suffer, unlike that of which we now complain, will be neither mutual, voluntary, nor terminable.

Another favorite phrase of the advocates of this system is, that it would promote national industry. What is national industry but the industry of individuals? And what encourages it like high wages? And what sustains the price of wages but the demand for labor? And what tends so much to increase and support this demand as the employment of our whole capital in those pursuits in which the most labor is required? The occupations, then, in which a given capital demands and maintains the greatest quantity of human labor, are most promotive of industry; and this is eminently true in a country where every thing else is more abundant than capital.

The price of manufactures involves the cost of the raw material, the sum paid the owner of the capital employed in working it, and the wages of the workmen. It is when the last are greatest in proportion to the whole price, that industry is best paid and most encouraged. Machines for multiplying the effects of labor may, indeed, produce a great profit, but it accrues to the owners of them, not to those employed in managing them. Should any one construct a machine so perfect that it would enable a single hand, by merely turning a crank, to supply the country with broadcloth, the possessor of this curious piece of mechanism would certainly make a fortune; but the laborer who put it in motion would receive not a cent more than the regular wages for turning a crank. The occupations in which much money is laid out for complicated machinery, for lands, buildings, and fixtures, to accumulate the raw material, or the means of converting it to use, or to keep on hand a great quantity of the articles manufactured, so as to dispose of them most beneficially in the market, may afford a profitable investment for capital, but have

no exclusive nor peculiar tendency to increase the price or the amount of labor. The factory at Waltham tends to raise wages no more than every other establishment, however small its capital, which employs the same number of hands; and it is difficult to conceive a case, in which industry or its reward can be increased by turning any number of men from one pursuit to another. The machines and implements for the aid of labor, which can be profitably employed with a very small capital, such as the tools of the mechanic, are most useful to the poor; those which require a large capital, to the rich; the former tend to diffuse wealth, the latter to concentrate it. Which is most consonant to our institutions and character?

Those employments, such as household manufactures, which do not interfere with other business, but only occupy its intervals, do indeed increase the quantity of industry in a country. But these need the least encouragement. The labor devoted to them is an absolute gain to the individual, as well as to the public, and may be deemed to cost him nothing; hence, he is in no danger from the competition of those who must derive the means of support, however small, from making similar articles. The same may be said of those which afford occupation to children, and to the other classes, who now subsist with little or no occupation. The subsistence of these persons being already provided for, their wages, in such new employment, would be clear profit. They can really afford to work for nothing, and will be induced to do so for next to nothing.

It is incumbent on those who would give aid to one class of men, to be satisfied, by clear proof, that they shall not materially injure another class, who deserve, at least, protection. In the year 1810, the United States possessed 1,428,728 tons of shipping; and, as one seaman is required, on an average, for every twenty tons, more than 71,000 men must have been employed in that capacity. For every hundred tons four tons of iron are consumed, the price of working which, is four cents a pound; hence, the very labor of the blacksmith on the iron used in constructing those vessels, independently of subsequent repairs, was worth above four millions and a half of dollars. Among how many was this divided? The ship carpenters, valuing their labor at ten dollars a ton, one third less than has sometimes been paid, received, for building these vessels, more than fourteen millions of dollars. It is a given rule, that, for every ton of shipping, a ton of timber is necessary; and for this, at nine dollars a ton, the farmer must have received nearly thirteen millions.

The average duration of our vessels, including losses at sea, is estimated, by competent judges, to be seven years. But, suppose it to be ten; then, in order to maintain the same quantity of shipping, these supplies must, every ten years, be repeated; and this, in addition to the whole amount necessary for repairs. Estimate the number of men thus supported, and add to them the ship joiners, the boat builders, the mast makers, the block and pump makers, the painters, glaziers, and plumbers, the anchor smiths, the coppersmiths, the carvers, sail makers, riggers, rope makers, the bakers of ship bread,



the butchers, and packers of provisions, the grocers, ship chandlers, tallow chandlers, the coopers, the lightermen, the truckmen, the stevedores, and laborers, the gun smiths, the mathematical instrument makers, the wharfingers, the owners of wharves and warehouses and all others, who derive a subsistence from navigation, and their wives and children, and all dependent on them, and see how wide a ruin would follow the attempt to do, what we are pleased to call "commanding our own consumption."

The coasting trade, it may be said, will be left. But to what will this amount, after deducting all that portion of it which is employed in transmitting the goods received from other countries, or those destined to them, and in the vast traffic which ultimately results from foreign commerce?

It has been asserted, that this new project will be beneficial to agriculture; that, though the farmer will pay a higher price for all he buys, and be taxed more than ever for the support of the government, yet, that he will be compensated for this, by the creation of another or better market for the produce of the soil. Is this true? That produce consists of articles of food, or of the raw materials of manufactures. How is it possible that manufactures should extend the demand for food? Surely it will not be pretended, in spite of our own experience, and that of all mankind, that manufacturing countries increase most rapidly in population, or that they require greater means of subsistence than others. The farmer feeds all the inhabitants of the country now, and here he can do no more. Since, then, the demand for food cannot be increased, the price can be raised only by diminishing the supply. If many, now engaged in cultivating the soil, are forced to quit the pursuit, the quantity of food raised may become less, and the price, of course, greater. Thus, farmers are to be driven from their present employment, to seek subsistence in another, and fields, now under culture and laden with plenty, are to be abandoned to desolation; and all this for the extension and encouragement of agriculture. Yet, though the domestic market for food could not thus be increased, the foreign market might and would be diminished; for, we cannot afford to export our productions to other countries, unless we will take what they can give us in return. Now, our farmer understands very well, that a foreign demand for his produce benefits him, by advancing the price, not only of that which is actually exported, but of the whole quantity raised; he obtains more money for all that he sells, whether it is to be consumed at home or abroad.

The establishment of domestic manufactures would, indeed, create a demand at home for the materials of which they are composed, but, at the same time, would lessen the foreign demand to the same extent; because, the nation which now supplies us, would cease to want that quantity of the raw material which it converts into manufactures for our market. And, besides, to increase the price of such manufactures, tends to diminish their consumption, and, consequently, the demand for them, and for their materials. It is the direct interest of the farm-



er, that the raw materials raised by him should be manufactured as cheaply as possible, in order to increase this consumption and demand. It is also his direct interest, for this reason: that the smaller the portion of the price paid by the consumer, which the manufacturer takes for his share, the larger the proportion which the cultivator receives for his. The extent to which his productions are manufactured and used, is all that affects him; no matter by whom it is done, or where. Some appear to imagine, that our soil must always produce the same quantity, and that we have only to determine whether it shall be made use of at home or abroad. But this is not so. The productions of agriculture are created by the call for them. The existence of more grain and cotton than we actually use, is only the consequence of the demand for exportation. Destroy the cause, as would be done by prohibiting importations, and what will become of the effect?

There is, however, an argument in favor of encouraging particular employments by bounties or taxes, which merits a different consideration. It has been justly urged, that there may be occupations peculiarly adapted to our situation and character, and which, if once established, might be carried on here better than elsewhere, so as to afford their productions at a cheaper rate than is now paid for them; and yet habit, and indolence, and the natural attachment of men to the pursuits in which they have been educated, and the immediate expense of commencing the business, and the want of that skill which only time and experience can give, and a doubt how soon or how certainly the profit will be realized, may deter individuals from engaging in these occupations, and induce them to persist in others, less profitable to themselves and to the public; and that, if these difficulties can be overcome by a present tax, which will be more than compensated by the reduction of prices hereafter, it is good policy and economy to impose it. On this principle, encouragement has always been given by our government to particular pursuits, and it should always be given, to the full extent that this principle will warrant. By its adoption, the whole subject is made a mere question of economy—of economy to consumers, who are all the people; and it becomes our duty to study, not how to make manufactures dear, but how to make them, on the whole, cheap and abundant. The best, and, perhaps, the only effectual mode of doing it, is, to promote competition at the lowest prices.

There is a difference, in this respect, between navigation and manufactures. Our ships, engaged in foreign trade, derive no advantage, even in our own market, from being near it; for all vessels must make two passages, in order to carry goods from one country to another, and bring back the returns; and it makes no difference which country is the first starting place. Our ships, too, when in the ports of a foreign nation, are liable to have a tax imposed on them, which shall prevent their entering into fair competition with those of that nation in the trade between us. But our manufactures used at home, (and these only are benefitted by an impost,) have an advantage over

all foreign goods, equal both to the expense of transporting the latter, estimated by Mr. Hamilton at between fifteen and thirty per cent. and to the duty imposed on their importation here for the purpose of revenue.

Besides, no other nation can tax our manufactures, so as to prevent their entering into competition with its own, in our market, or can give its own any advantage over ours, but by granting a bounty on their exportation from its dominions. This bounty is never, in fact, equal to the cost of transportation and the impost here; and should it in any instance be greater, an equality would be produced by laying an additional duty, equal to the difference, on importations from the single country which granted the bounty. The policy of producing equality by such means, of raising prices to produce competition at high rates, when competition is useful only as it lessens them, may well be doubted. But, on any ground, by what train of reasoning can it be shewn, that, because a bounty is granted on the exportation of linens from England, it would promote a free and general competition to prohibit or tax those brought from Germany? Yet this is the motive assigned for imposing a duty of six cents and a quarter on every yard of German linen costing ten cents.

According to the principle above laid down, the reason for a tax, increasing the price of goods for a time, being to lessen it afterwards, and the only motive for a present monopoly, to create future competition, it follows, as an invariable rule, that such tax or monopoly ought never to be perpetual: for this would be sacrificing the end to the means. As the burden thus imposed on the public, is certain and immediate, it follows also, that those who call for it must shew, that a full equivalent will ultimately be received in the reduction of prices; otherwise, the bargain is a bad one. Again, since every benefit ought to be purchased as cheaply as possible, it follows still further, that they must prove the present tax to be the smallest which is competent to effect their professed object; for, all beyond this, is a useless sacrifice. It is, in our opinion, an insuperable objection to the proposed bill, that its advocates make no attempt to shew to what the advantage which they expect will amount, or what amount of taxes is requisite for its attainment.

As a general rule, the employments which need the smallest encouragement are best fitted to our actual condition, and most conducive to our prosperity; and those which can be supported only by great bounties or taxes, are shewn, by that very fact, to be least adapted to our character and circumstances, and least likely to occasion a reduction of prices hereafter, by sustaining a free and general competition at the lowest rates. The enterprise and activity of our citizens leave little doubt that the pursuits most appropriate to our situation will ultimately be established, without any extravagant aid from Government; so that the only effect of assisting them would be to hasten their establishment. Is this an advantage worth the price we are called on to pay for it? Those who assert the fact are bound to prove it clearly.

It is only in a very clear case that this principle should be put in practice; since, in the experience of nations, the failure of such attempts has been much more frequent than their success, and has always produced mischiefs not easily remedied. The encouragement of silk manufactures in England is a source of great distress among the people, and great embarrassment to the government.

The other question is equally important. Is the immense tax proposed to be laid in favor of particular manufactures necessary for their protection? Since true economy requires the expense of protecting those articles only which become cheaper hereafter in consequence of this protection, no manufactures should be encouraged from this motive but such as can be afforded by the maker at a lower price, after the difficulties of establishing them are surmounted; and these, of course, so long as they continue to maintain the price at which they can be sold at first, afford him a profit constantly increasing. Whenever, therefore, the encouragement granted to any manufacture is sufficient to occasion its establishment and existence, its extension, and the further emolument of those engaged in it, may safely be left, and ought to be left, to time, skill, and industry. Can, then, the manufacturers, for whose benefit the new tariff is chiefly designed, exist under our present system? Do they in fact exist? Their zeal, activity, and almost success, in the attempt to render their fellow citizens tributary to their wealth, seem to leave no room for such a question. The necessity of supporting cotton factories is most strongly urged. Now, the price at which the manufacturers in our vicinity can go and take the cotton from the wharf, and bring it back manufactured to the warehouse, is little more than the mere impost on the cottons of India, the only goods which would otherwise come into competition with it.

Though the advocates of the bill under consideration assume the name and the authority of the manufacturers of the United States, the great majority of our manufacturers would be directly and severely injured by its enactment. In this part of the country, those most deeply interested in the very pursuits to which it gives the greatest aid, desire, as we believe, no further encouragement, but understand their true interests, and are well aware that exorbitant taxes, imposed for their profit, could not be long in operation before their effect on other manufacturers, and on the community, would be known and felt; the natural consequence of which would be, to cause a reaction in public opinion, and induce the people, in their indignation, to withdraw the protection now afforded to our manufacturers, and to leave them to contend at once with foreigners in our market, without any other superiority than that derived from being near the consumer, and from duties laid for the sole purpose of revenue.

We rejoice to see manufactures flourish, and deem their spontaneous growth an evidence of wealth and prosperity; but to them, and to all pursuits, the best protection is that which is permanent. The great excellence of laws, and especially of such as affect the employments of men, is stability. By this only, individuals are enabled to

regulate their conduct beforehand, and to calculate the chance of success in the occupations which they may select, without danger of having the bread of their industry snatched from their mouths, by nice experiments and novelties in legislation.

We therefore recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That we have regarded with pleasure, the establishment and success of manufactures among us; and consider their growth, when natural and spontaneous, and not the effect of a system of bounties and protection, as an evidence of general wealth and prosperity.

*Resolved*, That, relying on the ingenuity, enterprise, and skill, of our fellow citizens, we believe that all manufactures, adapted to our character and circumstances, will be introduced and extended, as soon and as far, as will promote the public interest, without any further protection than they now receive.

*Resolved*, That no objection ought ever to be made to any amount of taxes, equally apportioned, and imposed for the purpose of raising revenue necessary for the support of Government; but that taxes imposed on the people, for the sole benefit of any one class of men, are equally inconsistent with the principles of our Constitution, and with sound policy.

*Resolved*, That the supposition, that, until the proposed tariff, or some similar measure, be adopted, we are, and shall be, dependent on foreigners for the means of subsistence and defence, is, in our opinion, altogether fallacious and fanciful, and derogatory to the character of the nation.

*Resolved*, That high bounties, on such domestic manufactures as are principally benefited by that tariff, favor great capitalists, rather than personal industry, or the owners of small capitals, and, therefore, that we do not perceive its tendency to promote national industry.

*Resolved*, That we are equally incapable of discovering its beneficial effects on agriculture, since the obvious consequence of its adoption would be, that the farmer must give more than he now does for all he buys, and receive less for all he sells.

*Resolved*, That the imposition of duties, which are enormous, and deemed by a large portion of the people to be unequal and unjust, is dangerous, as it encourages the practice of smuggling.

*Resolved*, That, in our opinion, the proposed tariff, and the principles on which it is avowedly founded, would, if adopted, have a tendency, however different may be the motives of those who recommend them, to diminish the industry, impede the prosperity, and corrupt the morals of the people.





MEMORIAL

OF THE  
COMMISSIONERS

OF THE  
LAND OFFICE

IN  
RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION

OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PASSED MARCH 10, 1871